

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

help.

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that there is no proposal under their consideration for allowing State Bank of India or other public sector banks to set up branches in Kathmandu.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Pepper Prices

814. SHRI KODIKKUNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are aware that prices of Pepper is falling in open market;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to stop the fall in the prices;

(c) whether the Government have considered the demand of the pepper growers to set minimum price of pepper; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY-MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHED): (a) Yes, Sir. There has been a decline in the prices of black pepper since October 1991.

(b) As a short terms measure, Government has announced suspension of cess on exports of pepper to GCA countries till 31st March 1992.

(c) and (d). A major factor in the decline of pepper prices has been the international oversupply situation. In such a situation, fixing support price by a single nation will not

Export of Meat to Indonesia

815. SHRI RATILAL VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of meat per month exported to Indonesia during 1990-91;

(b) whether Indonesia have since decided not to import meat from India;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the effect of this decision on the related industries in the country and the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHED): (a) to (e). Indonesia does not import meat from India. No meat was exported to Indonesia during 1990-91. Indonesia has made no change in this policy subsequently.

[*English*]

Procurement of Natural Rubber

816. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

the grade-wise quantity of natural rubber procured by State Trading Corporation in the year 1991 from the domestic market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): During the year 1991 STC procured following grade-wise quantities of natural rubber from the domestic market:-

RMA – 5

February – April 1991 – 7700 MT

October – December, 1991 – 2614 MT

RMA – 4

November – December, 1991 – 2126 MT

12400 MT

Ganja Cultivation

817. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ganja cultivation is permitted in a limited way for medicinal use;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the places where such cultivation is prevalent;

(d) whether the Government are aware that illegal Ganja cultivation is on increase in interior forests of the country; and

(e) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c). Cultivation of cannabis plant, from which Ganja is obtained, can be permitted for medical or scientific purposes under the N.D.P.S. Act, 1985. The power in this regard vests with the State Governments.

(d) and (e). The illicit cultivation of cannabis plant is generally carried out in interior forests of the country. The following is the information about destruction of illicit cultivation of cannabis plants by Central and State

enforcement agencies carried out during the last five years in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra:—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Area destroyed (In acres)</i>
1987	461
1988	1439
1989	3139
1990	1907
1991	1013

Enforcement agencies concerned maintain vigil in the matter and wherever illicit cultivation is noticed, it is destroyed.

Export of Sugar

818. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have been exporting sugar to various countries; and

(b) if so, the names thereof, the quantum of sugar exported during each of the last